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JFK—Who? and Why?

While many may ask, "Why pursue it?" — it is obvious to others that too many questions surrounding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy 20 years ago in Dallas have gone unanswered — if not covered up by what one Frederick researcher claims is the "biggest whitewash" in U.S. history.

Harold Weisberg, Frederick's resident expert — if not the nation's foremost researcher and exposé of "classified" information on the JFK assassination — has been a man in demand in recent weeks as the country observed the 20th anniversary of the heinous crime.

Weisberg has been on radio and TV, interviewed by the press, and has been speaking to civic clubs and other organizations. Monday he spoke to the Frederick Evening Serotoma Club, presenting a fascinating talk — brief and to the point.

The "point," according to Weisberg, who has authored a shelf of books on what he describes as the government's whitewashing of the investigation, is that the assassina-

tion has "never been investigated."

The contention he supports with mounds of documents squeezed out of FBI files through court and Congressional action is that the FBI and the Warren Commission had already made up their minds that it was Lee Harvey Oswald alone who gunned down President Kennedy. The agencies dug no deeper, he argues, ignoring evidence heavily indicating there was a conspiracy.

Weisberg, however, has not stopped digging.

"Thank God for the Freedom of Information Law," he exclaimed, a law through which he has brought to public light more information about the assassination and "whitewashing" than anyone — despite what he labels total opposition and unceasing harassment from the FBI.

Yet Weisberg still sees hope in "our democracy," noting that Congress, sensing the obstruction to his efforts to obtain documents under the Freedom of Information Act, passed legislation requiring compliance. This has helped, he said, but not too much.

Marxist conspiracy?

some of the data that have come to light concerning the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and the startling conclusions that are suggested by them.

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy 20 years ago touched off an anguished era of tragic violence in America.

It also launched an endless round of speculation concerning who had killed the youthful chief executive, and why. At the time, certain conclusions were arrived at on a hurry-up basis. Today we have information with which to assess the tragedy more clearly — and to derive important lessons for the future.

In the aftermath of the assassination, an official commission headed by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren concluded that Kennedy had been killed by ex-Marine Lee Harvey Oswald, that Oswald had acted alone, and that the killing had no wider implications. In the perspective of two decades, the situation in many respects looks sharply different.

Based on the available evidence, the conclusion that Oswald shot the President has stood up. Efforts to explain away the ballistic and other data are not persuasive. That he acted alone, however, has been called into question, by the House Committee on Assassinations among others. And the possible motives for the killing are quite different from what we were led to believe back in the '60s.

The key ingredient in the equation, known at the time but largely glossed over, is the fact that Oswald was a dedicated Marxist revolutionary. He had been converted to Marxism at an early age, had defected to the Soviet Union, married the niece of a KGB official, was a fanatic follower of Fidel Castro, a member of the Castro-financed Fair Play for Cuba Committee, and a subscriber to Communist and Trotskyite publications.

Efforts have been made to link Oswald to anti-Castro Cubans, but the data on his political outlook point in just the opposite direction. To the extent that he had contact

hostile. The evidence is overwhelming that Oswald was a devout, fanatical Marxist.

Shortly before the assassination, Oswald journeyed to Mexico where he visited the Soviet and Cuban consulates, and was quoted as saying he would kill the President (the Cubans deny this). The day after the assassination, a mysterious pro-Castro Cuban tracked by U.S. authorities crossed the border into Mexico from Texas, then flew to Havana as the sole passenger on a Cubana airlines flight.

In addition, we now know that the Kennedy administration had been engaged in an effort to topple or assassinate Castro, and that Castro himself was probably aware of this. It was this background which prompted former President Lyndon Johnson to tell Howard K. Smith of ABC: "Kennedy was trying to get to Castro, but Castro got to him first."

Such leads were not followed by the Warren Commission or other investigators because of instructions from above to avoid "the Communist angle." The fear was that tracing Oswald's Communist connections would lead to a confrontation with the Soviets, which our leaders wanted to avoid. It was also considered unlikely the Communists would do anything so provocative and dangerous as planning or encouraging the assassination of a U.S. President.

We have learned in recent days, however, that Communist higher-ups are not averse to murdering free world leaders or bringing the world to the brink of war through acts of seemingly senseless violence. In the past two years we have witnessed charges by the Italian government that the Bulgarian secret police — which ultimately means the Soviet KGB — were involved in the attempt to kill the Pope. And we also have the evidence of the recent brutal shoot-down of the Korean jetliner.

Put it all together, and the likelihood that President Kennedy was a victim of Marxist fanaticism — possibly even a foreign-directed Marxist murder plot — seems far greater today than it did in 1963.